Ockbrook

in old picture postcards

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by
J.Lec. Smith

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INTRODUCTION

The parish of Ockbrook and Borrowash comprises a roughly rectangular piece of land some three miles by one, set north and south and gently descending from high ground overlooking Dale Abbey all the way down to the mid-stream line of the river Derwent. It encompasses the whole watershed and valley of the Ock Brook, which trickles down its spine, and which was a coveted trout stream in Victorian times. In those days the parish was almost wholly farmland, with wheat, oats and pasture, apart from a few small manufacturies in the Borrowash area at the southern end. The venerable village of Ockbrook was then, as now, a place little known outside its immediate surroundings, yet since it is situated in the centre of the parish, and since the parish is as near as maybe in the centre of England, and since England was then, if not now, at the centre of the world, then it follows that, without knowing it, the Victorian world surely rotated about Ockbrook. Its name is probably of Saxon origin and has something to do with salmon, though some like to think it derives from its last Saxon overlord, one Occa. Strangely enough, and unlike most other old English placenames, it seems to be unique.

In addition to the river Derwent, an ancient road built by the Romans from their fort at Derventio to the Trent crossing at Sawley runs across its southern parts, and between the two, later entrepreneurs first cut a canal and then laid a railway. Not one of these fluent lines of communication was found to adequately connect post-war Derby with post-war Nottingham, however, so that there is now a monstrous east-west motorway in addition. This does what none of the other four did; it effectively cuts the parish in two.

Way back in 1837, Robert Chevin celebrated the royal occasion of that year by giving his hostelry at the bottom of Bakehouse Lane a new name. He pontificated perhaps that while its old name was bearable and even appropriate while her recently deceased uncles were on the throne, it was not in keeping with the accession of the bright young queen. So the 'Horse and Jockey' became one of the first of so many 'Queen's Head's'. At that time a hundred Ockbrook eyes were turned on London, not only to note the goings on at the Palace, but more importantly in the Houses of Parliament and in the City. This was because it was not a one-man, big-house village, nor had been for 250 years, and in 1837 there were no less than seven Lords of the Manor plus twenty-five other major landowners. Not only that, but just five years earlier the names of thirty odd well-to-do rentpayers had been added to the Electoral Roll.

By this time the rest of the people of Ockbrook had come to accept the fact that apart from these gentlemen and a handful of tradesmen, there was only one other class in the village, that was the poor, and they were it. Yet many of them had grandparents who could recall the very different years of their youth, when in general the poor were looked down on as spendthrifts, half-wits or vagrants, while they and their like had formed an almost self-sufficient middle group, each with his own little bits of unenclosed land, and rights on the common. But those halcyon days were now long past; they were landless, and for those who lacked the dexterity, desire or eyesight to work the infernal knitting machines, poor relief was the order of the day. Many of the younger and more adventurous of course tore up their shallow roots and went west to Derby or east to Nottingham, settling where work could be found, but with the opening of the local Borrowash station of the new Midland Counties Railway in 1839, new possibilities arose. It was slowly realised that it was no longer necessary for your place of employment to be within walking distance of your home, and eventually a new solid middle group grew up in the village to replace the small landowners lost a century before.

The first to commute however were not the villagers employed in the towns, but prosperous townies who saw it as a pleasant place to live in the country, and they built several fine houses here in the later Victorian years.

The railway itself provided some work for Ockbrook folk, just as the canal and the turnpike road had done, but the greater providers were the water mills powered by the roaring river Derwent. In Victorian times these drove machinery for cotton doubling and iron slitting, in addition to corn grinding, and it is strange that this little area between the road and the river, which was then the noisiest, most pushing place in the parish, is now one of the most peaceful. Tall trees and a tangle of undergrowth cover the ground where the mills stood and the canal ran, and only the stately Riverside House remains. This house, built in about 1825 as the on-site residence of John Towle, the new proprietor of the cotton doubling mill, has lost all its surrounding industry and has become a quiet country retreat, while the complicated waterways, which were devised to maximise the power of the Derwent, are now an anglers' paradise.

Like the rest of the country, Ockbrook suffered the extraordinary population explosion of the early nineteenth century, and in the census four years after Victoria ascended the throne, from an eighteenth century figure of about 850, 1,765 persons were recorded, 795 males and 970 females. Thereafter a shift to the towns caused the number to fall for a while, but towards the end of the century Ockbrook's dormitory role was being well established and by 1920 the population had settled at about 3,000. It grew again post-war and while in 1800 there were two acres of ground per person, in 1850 there was one, in 1900 threequarters, and now there is but one quarter.

In spite of this increase in the parish population, with its inevitable pockets of post-war urbanisation, and in spite of its proximity to a spreading Derby and the intrusion of the bleak by-pass road, the village of Ockbrook has been spared the worst excesses of modernisation and improvement. This is partly because it does not lie on a thoroughfare, and partly because its natural beauty of hills and tall trees inspire preservation, but mainly through sheer good fortune. The calm unchanging face of the Moravian Settlement has long set a standard of good taste, and is one of the most important parts of that good fortune. And while the by-pass road has cruelly severed the village of Ockbrook from the village of Borrowash, it has in a way done both a good turn, emphasising the seclusion of the one and re-establishing the identity of the other. In the mid-Victorian days Borrowash was all a-bustle, with its own green heart in the famous Barron nurseries, its muscle in the Towles' mills, and its soul in the Methodist chapels and Swindells' Manor House, but later, when these enterprises ran out of steam, it became a rather featureless ribbon of mixed enterprises, with vistas which did little to inspire the producers of picture postcards. They were not all that enthusiastic about the village of Ockbrook either, for that matter, concentrating their limited efforts rather on All Saints Church and the Settlement frontage, but if you will join us for a clockwise stroll we will do our best with what we have to bring to life this unpretentious parish as it was round about the turn of the century.

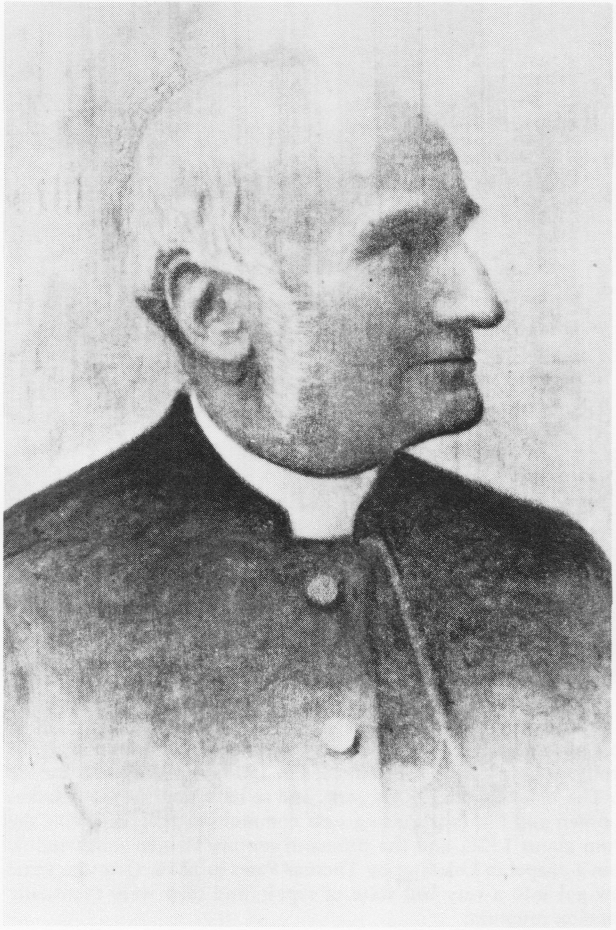
Acknowledgement:

My special thanks to those who have allowed me to use their postcards, in particular Barbara Armstead, Edna Plant, John Allen, Stanley Clifford, Alan MacGibbon and the Derby Central Library.

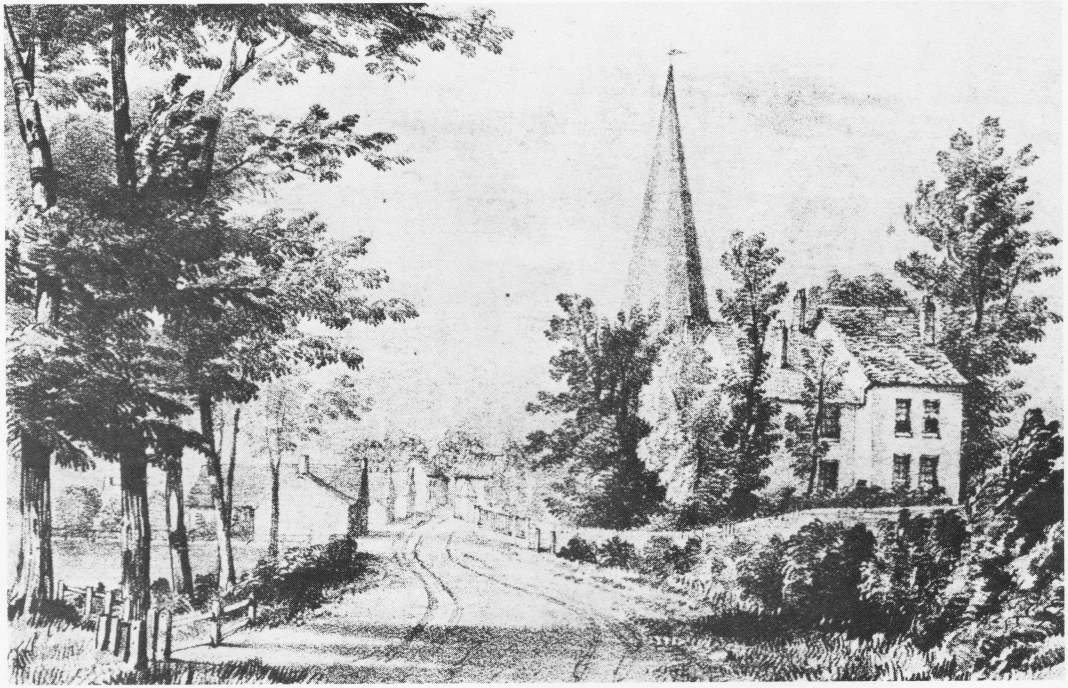
1. While this aerial view of the village of Ockbrook was photographed in recent years, it depicts the same layout of roads which would have fallen on the eye of a lark soaring over Red Hills in the year 1900. The broad Green Lane on the left, with its curving Moor Lane continuation disappearing north; the Moravian diamond below, delineated by The Settlement, Bare Lane, Bakehouse Lane and Flood Street; the serpentine meanderings of The Ridings and Church Street on the right, passing out of the village to the south as Cole Lane; then, on the left again, Victoria Avenue heading for Borrowash. In the centre the two links, New Street and Collier Lane, and on the fringes the five access tracks, one going north to The Fields, three to the east, that is Far Lane to Little London, Near Lane to Hopwell, and Mill Lane to the windmill, and one to the west, Muddy Lane, heading towards Borrow Wood but not quite getting there.

2. Unlike many parish churches hereabouts, which are perched on peaks, All Saints stands close to the brook, on the lowest piece of land in the village, so that its setting does nothing to aggrandize its already squat spire, nor to lift its nave above the surrounding tall trees. The structural enlargements all seem to have been done on the cheap, and it now presents an unashamed mis-match of rough stone, hewn blocks, hand-made bricks and some of recent manufacture. The freely swinging weathercock is unorientated, and only the local weatherwise know that chill sear winds in spring mean he is facing east, warm rain in summer, south, rough gusts in autumn, west, and lifeless cold in winter, north. The unobtrusiveness, frugality and lack of direction of its little church, somehow typifies Ockbrook and its history over the centuries.

3. This picture was taken in about 1895 shortly before the old box pews were replaced by the present pine, which were the gift of Edward Elsey of Hopwell Hall. At the same time the present pretty pulpit, which changed sides in 1919 to make room for the War Memorial tablet, replaced the austere octagonal one shown. The brass chandelier has gone, and so have the barbarous spikes on the chancel screen, the top section of which has been taken down and fashioned into a new communion rail, displacing the brass bedstead type used previously. This screen, which dates from about 1520, and the sixteenth century stained glass window which depicts the four evangelists, were brought to Ockbrook from a chapel in Leicester by Thomas Pares in 1810. Over the years both the stone mullions and the glass assemblies of the window got into a very bad state of repair, and they were eventually displaced in 1967, when the old stained glass was presented to Leicester museum.



4. The Reverend Melville Scott came up from Buckingham in 1851 to assume his appointment as curate at All Saints. The vicar, the much admired Samuel Hey, who himself came here in a similar role some thirty-seven years earlier, died in 1854. To his surprise, Melville was invited by the patron Thomas Pares to succeed, and with the help of Samuel's daughter Mary as his wife, he played a paramount part in village life for nearly two decades. He left in 1872 to become the first vicar of Derby's new St. Andrews Church, which was designed by his brother George Gilbert of Albert Memorial fame, and in his book 'The Force Of Love' he describes in affectionate detail his 'twenty-one years of ministry in dear, dear Ockbrook'.



5. Until 1866 All Saints vicarage lay alongside the church. It was a substantial building with three reception rooms and six bedrooms, but had become rather decrepid and damp, so that after the sad death of his little son there, the Reverend Melville Scott decided that it was a dangerous place to live, and he took his family into temporary accommodation on the Settlement while new premises were being built on Victoria Avenue, halfway between All Saints at Ockbrook and St. Stephens at Borrowash. The old building was demolished, its stone being dumped in the marshy hollow on the other side of Cole Lane, which thereafter became a useful local 'quarry'.

6. This picture shows the much-needed extension to the church-yard which was made possible by the removal of the old vicarage. The gable end of Church Farm can be seen on the right and slightly left a glimpse of Pear Tree House, then sporting the two chimney stacks which soar high above the roof line. There lived for many years Edward Glover, manufacturer and churchwarden. This house was without road frontage, the main entrance being served by a footpath which came to be known as Glovers Twitchell. The house was built in 1825 by John Pares, who preceded Thomas as patron of the church, as a retirement home for the Hopwell housekeeper, Mrs. Mary Freer.

7. Opposite the old vicarage lay Church House, which belonged to the vicar. The main part, which stood gable-end on to Church Street, contained just four large rooms, two on each floor, and it was said to be the oldest house in Ockbrook, with the date 1642 over the door. A secret passage running under Church Street allegedly connected its cellars with those of the vicarage. The single story extension, which stretched all the way down to Collier Lane, included the vicar's coach-house and stable, but its upper end was a huge kitchen joined to the main dwelling. Great was the consternation in the village when the vicar of the day had the whole place pulled down to accommodate a small modern house which he had built on the site. The tenant just before the First World War was L.J. Byatt, an All Saints stalwart, who carried the cross in church and put on 1d. picture shows in the house in aid of the Missionary Society.

8. The White Swan stands opposite the church, and was favoured with the patronage of at least one of Ockbrook's vicars. In 1885 the Reverend Lewis Lewis, a bachelor gay with a slight impediment in his speech, rather overdid it, which made his sermon even more difficult to follow than usual. The affronted congregation were led out of the church by patron Pares of Hopwell Hall, and the Reverend was banished to the backwoods. There, however, he stiffened his self-control by taking himself a stern wife, and in 1897 returned to his Ockbrook duties, and died here, well respected, in 1916. In those days Ockbrook's last cruck cottage still stood where now is the car park entrance, but in this picture the cruck cottage has gone, likewise Church Row which came next, and on the far plot, Church House has been usurped by the later vicar's new abode.

9. Church Row was a string of tiny tenements set at right-angles to the road between Church House and the cruck cottage, the right-hand end of which can be seen in this picture with a white sign over its door, which presumably reads 'Church Row'. Each dwelling had two rooms up and two down, but there were no doorways at the back. In front were narrow strips of garden ending in a line of dry-earth privies. Humble dwellings indeed, but the homes of many thriving families over the years, and often beautifully kept. The left-hand end of the row can be seen just above the Church House gateway in Collier Lane. This gateway and the long garden wall to its left still survive.

10. In this more distant view the Church Street end of Church Row can be seen just behind the tomb stones in the churchyard, and beyond its far end here is a large building lying at right-angles. This was a gimp factory, and it may have been the 'raison d'être' for the building of the cottages. The boy on the stile was perhaps recalling how, when the snow was on the ground, he had lifted his sledge over it to savour the thrills of the Red Hills toboggan run, and how he had later clambered back, soaked to the skin, having been precipitated by his headstrong steed into the winter-swollen Ock Brook at the bottom. No Ockbrook boy was, or is, an Ockbrook boy, until he has been christened thus.

11. The hollow beside Cole Lane lies in the centre of this picture, and one wonders whether it is the remains of an ancient outcrop of coal which perhaps gave the road its name, the ridge along its left-hand side possibly being part of a waggon way to the main road or the river Derwent. However this may be, by the nineteenth century Ockbrook had to import coal from the pits beyond the Dale Hills in the north. In hard times these provided employment as well as fuel, and little groups of Ockbrook men would daily trek by footpath across the fields to earn a living. They had to leave their homes in the early hours, which meant contending with darkness as well as cold in the winter, to begin a ten-hour shift a sometimes up to their waists in water.

12. Going south along Cole Lane from the top of Carr Hill in 1900, one would pass the newly built castles of the nouveau-riche high on the left, and open fields tumbling down to the brook on the right, then turning right at the main road junction, and passing through the little hamlet of Shacklecross, one would plunge into the vast nurseries of William Barron. Previously employed by the Earl of Harrington at Elvaston, William became an eminent landscape gardener, and his services, including the speciality of moving fully-grown trees, were in demand all over the country and beyond. By 1900 the nurseries were managed by his son John, and the Borrowash day continued to be much governed by their start and stop-work bell. But John had already been astute enough to recognise the enhanced value of his land near the railway station, and there, instead of plants for sale, a commutors' dormitory was growing.

13. The present bridge carrying the road from Borrowash to Elvaston over the river Derwent, the midstream line of which constitutes the southernmost boundary of the parish, was built in 1898 out of funds accumulated from tolls levied for crossing the Cavendish and Harrington bridges over the Trent. The only previous bridge at Borrowash was a narrow wooden swivel affair owned by the Harringtons, situated a few yards upstream, to gain access to which it was necessary to turn right into the mill complex after crossing the railway. Payment had to be made for its use, so that the opening of the new 'wide' bridge, with its freedom of passage, provided the parish, in effect, with a new gateway to the south. The cotton doubling mills of John Towle had been a mainstay of Borrowash for most of the Victorian years, but by now the family had quitted their stately Riverside House, and mill races were definitely old hat.

14. The railway came early to Borrowash, the Midland Counties Company opening a station here on the other side of Station Road in 1839. For sixty years thereafter, until mechanised road transport started feeling its feet, a railway connection was of prime importance to the well-being of any town or village, and those places which were fortunate enough to have one, themselves became important to the railway company, witness the high standard of buildings and equipment at what was no more than a minor country station. Good housekeeping was the order of the day, and with shrubberies and flower beds en suite, it won several beauty contests. The very best people travelled by rail, the 8.20 or whatever being known as the 'top-hat train'. The stationmaster too was important, as testified by the tribute of 1876 to William Boddington in the churchyard 'for his integrity and generous regard for the public convenience, universally esteemed and lamented'. And take that smile off your face.

15. It is difficult to associate this spacious scene with the centre of Borrowash, but the Manor House, fronting on to the main road a few yards west from the Victoria Avenue junction, was in full residential use well into the twentieth century. Long, long ago, local landowner, the Reverend Henry Swindell lived there, and later, in the 1840's, Bryan Balguy, the Town Clerk of Derby. The grounds originally stretched down to the canal bank, where a small lake had been constructed, but towards 1900, like Barron's ground opposite, the roadside strip was ripe for classy commutors' residences and most of the present houses were built there about that time. The Manor House was then the home of Hepworth T. Alton, a Derby company director.

16. To commemorate Queen Victoria's Jubilee, lime, elm and chestnut trees were presented to the parish by our Hepworth and planted along 'Victoria Avenue', Alas, as they flourished, the significance of their planting faded, and they fought a losing battle with telephone poles and wires competing for their air space, double-deck buses demanding the removal of their lower branches, and increasingly suburban-minded householders clamouring for more light and less leaves. So for many years they were cruelly butchered by a succession of Philistines, so that the magnificent avenue envisaged by Barrons when they planted them, has never been realised. They are now better tended, but recently the dreaded Dutch elm disease took over from their human enemies and decimated their ranks.

17. Judging by the bull-nosed Morrises and mesdames' attire, the time of this picture was the late 1920's, when house-building was creeping down the hill and threatening the sanctity of the cricket field at the bottom. Had one trotted back to the Queen's Head from Borrowash some forty years earlier, the gig would have passed only four residences, Bloso House, Brookfield and the Vicarage on the right, and Greenway Cottage on the left. About 1895 Dr. Hunt transferred his surgery from The Poplars at the top of Green Lane to Brookfield, since when 'the doctors' has remained in that vicinity. Dr. John Aspinall Hunt, M.R.C.S.Eng., L.R.C.P.Edin., L.M., surgeon & medical officer & public vaccinator, medical superintendent Draycott Isolation Hospital, was born in Ockbrook to the important Hunt family of Bartlewood Lodge. He was a member of the Parish Council and lived at Brookfield for thirty years. Bloso House was the home of Miss Mary Hannah Towle, then of James Newbold J.P., and the Derby Market Place grocer Thomas Hodgkinson lived at Greenway Lodge.

18. Travelling along Victoria Avenue in more modern times, a student of the domestic architecture of the Midlands could probably find an example of every change in fashion during the past 150 years. All along, house-building there has been sporadic and haphazard, and without any help from town planners it has become an attractive place to live, with residences to suit all tastes and purses, from four-room terrace to swimming pool in the garden. No. 244, 'The Knoll,' was a c 1912 contribution, the home of George William Biddles, a boot inspector, which stood at the top of the hill on the east side. No doubt a design leader in its day, yet with its feet firmly in the past, with drab service rooms and a row of call bells in the back hall. It became sadly neglected in later years, and eventually the cleared site was valued more highly than the building, and down it came. The Vicarage and Brookfield were of course sacrificed for the bypass flyover bridge.

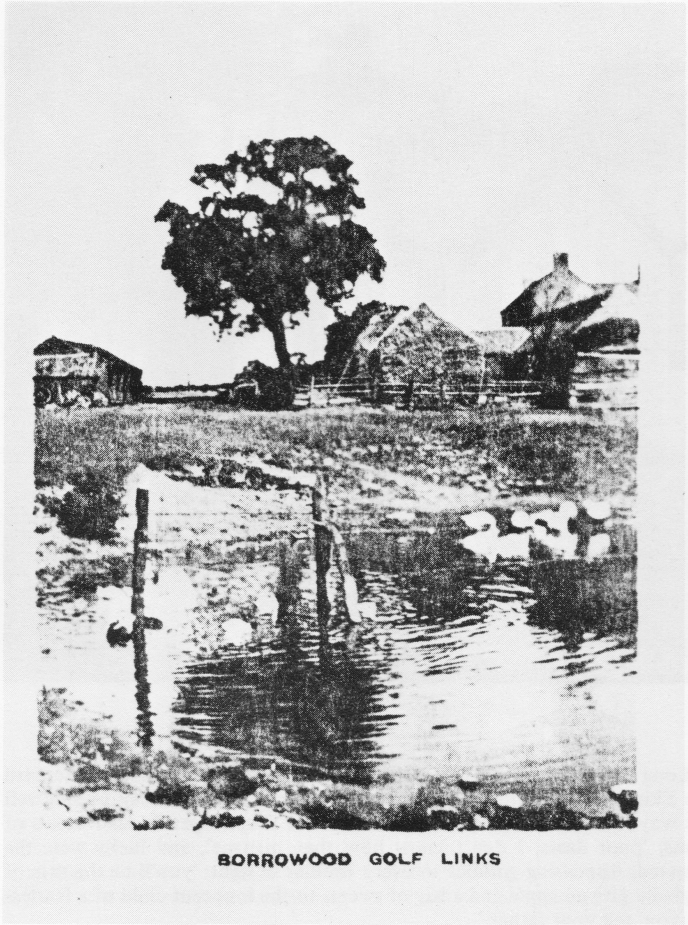
19. Proprietorship of the Queen's Head changed hands no fewer than ten times between 1880 and 1921, one of the short-stay victuallers being Frank Gresley the water colour artist. While he was here his two artist sons Harold and Cuthbert attended the village school. The three tiny cottages which were attached to its lower end were one up and one down affairs with ladder access between. Each had a little square of garden in land alongside, the remains of one of which still lie behind the telephone box. The field on which cricket is now played has belonged to the public house since Chevin times and was long used for grazing. The Chevins and their successors were grow-your-own-meat butchers, as well as publicans, and the local children had to get used to the idea that each little beast they befriended beside the roadside hedge, while waiting for daddy, had a due date for slaughter.

20. Rose Cottage, the house on the right, was the home of Agnes Summers for some forty years, and when widowed towards the end of the century she set up a private school there which she ran with the help of her daughter. Across the way is Harrisons' the grocers and the front of the Co-operative Society's premises can be glimpsed just beyond. The Society started their Ockbrook operations in a small way in 1902, actually preceding Christopher Harrison as tenants in what was known as Mary Mee's shop, but in 1914 they moved up the street into their own purpose-built block, which included the shop, store-rooms and three small staff dwellings. On the other side of the road opposite Harrisons' was the little square yard of William Potter the butcher, where the childrens' bovine friends were expeditiously despatched, and where a butchers shop has stood ever since.

21. Small private schools of the Agnes type were common in late Victorian years, even in a place like Ockbrook, which had had the benefit of both the fine Moravian boarding schools and good National day schools for most of the century. They catered for the children of the more prosperous farmers, and also for those of the fairly well-to-do residents whose work was in Derby or Nottingham but who chose to live in the country. Many were the kind of folk who could not perhaps afford the boarding school fees for their largish families, yet distanced themselves from those they openly referred to as 'the village people'. The school pictured here was in Church Street and run by two of the daughters of John Alfred Warwick, from about 1885. It was so successful that when they left Ockbrook in 1896 they found it profitable to continue with the school for many years in Derby.

22. At the Flood Street end of Bakehouse Lane on the right-hand side, where now the road has been widened, there stood a little detached shop which before World War One was the bakehouse of Frederick Blood. He would willingly bake your home-made bread alongside his own, which he distributed daily by pony and trap. But this small enterprise did not give the road its name, which came from a long lost Moravian bakehouse at its top end. Apart from Mee's Cottages, that is the cottage row behind Harrison's shop, the only houses then in the lane were those now called Tulip Tree House, The Orchard and Elm Cottage. The lodge at the top of the lane policed the drive to the Swallows Rest, now called The Grange, and off to the left among the trees lay The Mount.

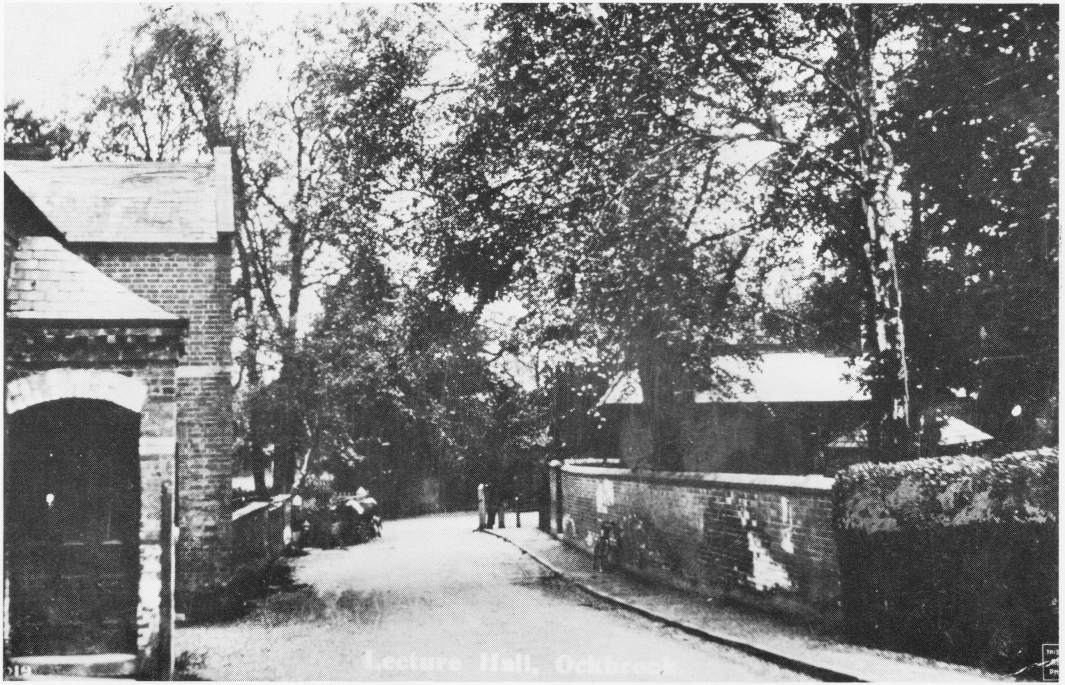
23. The Mount was probably built for William Holly, a Long Eaton pawnbroker, clothier and silversmith, and he lived there until the early 1900's, when it was taken over by Mrs. Annie Eking. She was the daughter of the 'squire', Edward Elsey of Hopwell Hall, and patronised the villagers in the nicest possible way. She would direct John Orchard the shopkeeper to send boxes of groceries to down-at-heel local families in times of stress, 'poor dears, I don't know how they manage', and lucky were the children who happened to be in the shop when she appeared, dispensing goodies to every toddler in sight; 'you'll be the ruin of me!' Then, at her Conservative garden party, she would gladly give an apple and a bag of sweets to the innocent child of a fearless Primrose League opponent, 'Labour wouldn't do that for you, tell your father.'



BORROWOOD GOLF LINKS

24. This picture may have been labelled with a touch of levity, Ockbrook being just about as far from a sandy seashore as possible, but the nine-hole golf course, which stretched down from the Muddy Lane footpath to beyond the by-pass, was no joke. The ducks bear evidence of a water hazard, and not only were there numerous hedgerows, but also no less than two artificial bunkers. The tenth or nineteenth was a large pavilion set on the windy hillside, and in those carefree Edwardian days the venture could scarcely fail, with a lively young membership and the ebullient Mrs. Annie Eking as the President. It is fortunate that the footpath to Spondon via Borrow Wood never became a highway, so that this broad strip of farmland has continued to safeguard the mutual boundary of the two parishes, with nothing but a temporary golf course ever suggesting a fusion.

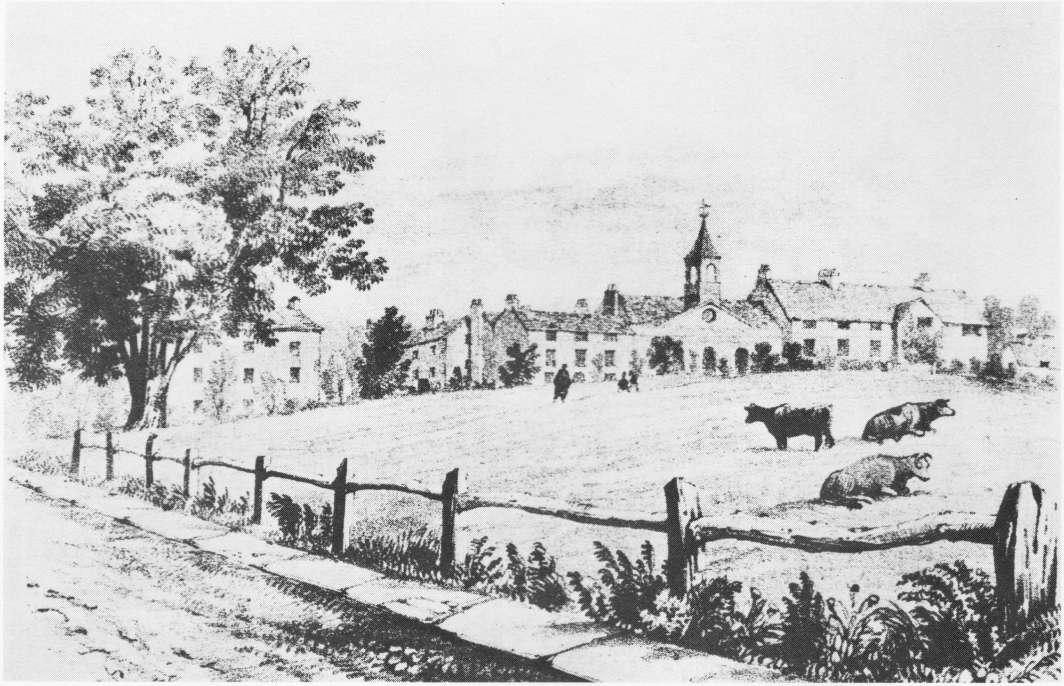
25. The Reverend William Mallalieu, a cousin of the Reverend James Mallalieu, Principal of the Moravian Boys School, had married into the wealthy Brook-Taylor family, and his wife Harriet had the 'Swallows Rest' built in 1868 for his retirement home, but unfortunately he died before taking up residence. The doorways were made especially wide for the passage of the wheelchair of his son, who was crippled by being dropped as an infant. But the disabled child, another William, grew up to be a very able man, and at the turn of the century was second to none in importance in Ockbrook. The house was vacated by the Mallalieus after the war and from 1920 to 1923 was the home of Viscount Lord Petersham, heir to the Earl of Harrington, and the present Earl was born there.



26. The lecture hall was built in 1867 as a boys Sunday School on the foundations of the New Inn brew house, and the extension beyond in 1880 for the girls. In 1914 it became a Red Cross Auxiliary Hospital designated to take wounded Belgian soldiers, and the formidable four-square matron who was sent up from London to take charge was allegedly a Belgian. She quickly organised the locals and soon all was ship-shape, but no customers arrived. Then she was suddenly recalled to London, returned in tears and said she had been dismissed. Spy fever was abroad at the time, and the discovery that she had worked in Germany before the dogs of war were loosed, set mischief afoot. Her swarthy and somewhat surly replacement, christened Black Maria by the disrespectful V.A.D. nurses, was British, and in the event no Belgian soldiers came to Ockbrook.

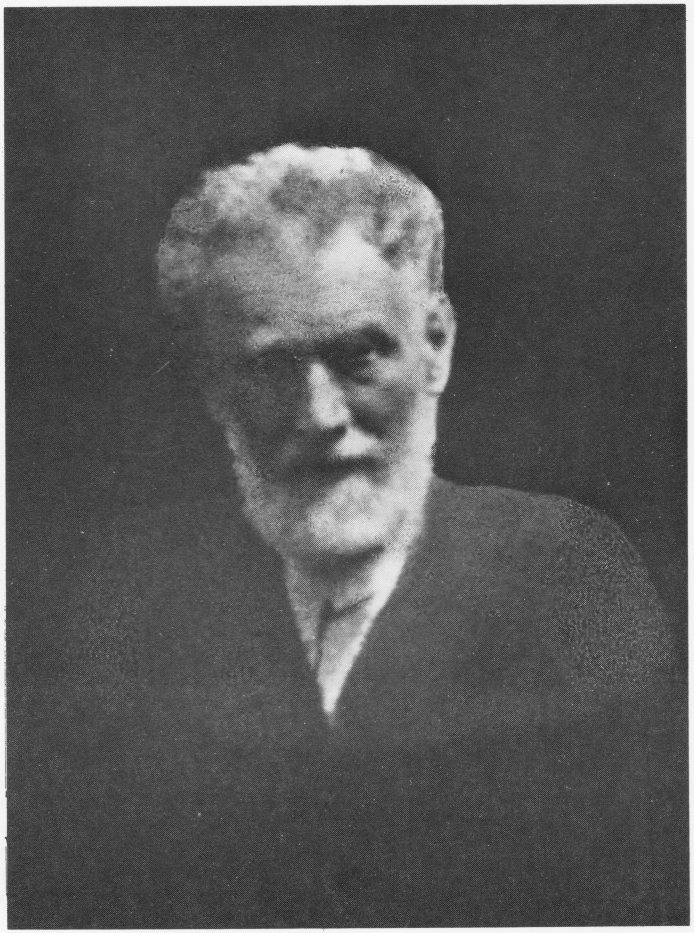
27. Herewith the staff of the hospital posed outside the entrance to Greenside in 1916, with, presumably, B.M. centre stage. The lady on her right is Miss Mabel Nelson, whose architect father designed Swallows Rest and married a cousin of William Mallalieu. She lived in the big house as a child and later at Hillside, and was a life-long friend of the village. She is remembered among other things as Commandant of the hospital, instigator of the Ockbrook Womens Institute, organiser of the Ockbrook Handbell Ringers and writer on Ockbrook history and current affairs until she died at the age of 80 in 1968. It is said that she, bless her, was largely instrumental in persuading the local authorities not to build their houses on the east side of the Ridings, so that we can all enjoy the view.

28. The Moravians built Greenside as the New Inn in 1792 to house their industrious missionaries who took short rests between one turn of duty and the next, but later, as the Ockbrook Settlement became more important, it was also much used to accommodate the prominent visitors summoned to headquarters and to provide an overnight stopping place for those passing through. It was enlarged at the expense of a Moravian benefactor from the south, one Mrs. Bates, who also paid for the building of Broadstairs, but never lived in it. Round about 1845 a small corner of Greenside was used to make Ockbrook's first post office; one can see the door at the top of the steps on the roadside which gave entry.



29. Across the foreground of this 1840 sketch lies the paved path which led down from the Settlement to the shop, and which perhaps gave the name of Shopstones to the area. The field in front of the Settlement chapel was the nearest thing Ockbrook had to a village green and was the scene of many minor festivities over the years. It was called Oak Tree Close, after the centuries-old tree depicted in the corner. The field below was called The Shop Close, and both are still open spaces and little changed, but that pride of the place, the mighty oak, was taken down in 1878. It can be seen that Mrs. Bates' Broadstairs, the house behind The Manse, had quite an open aspect when built, which was largely closed down by later building.

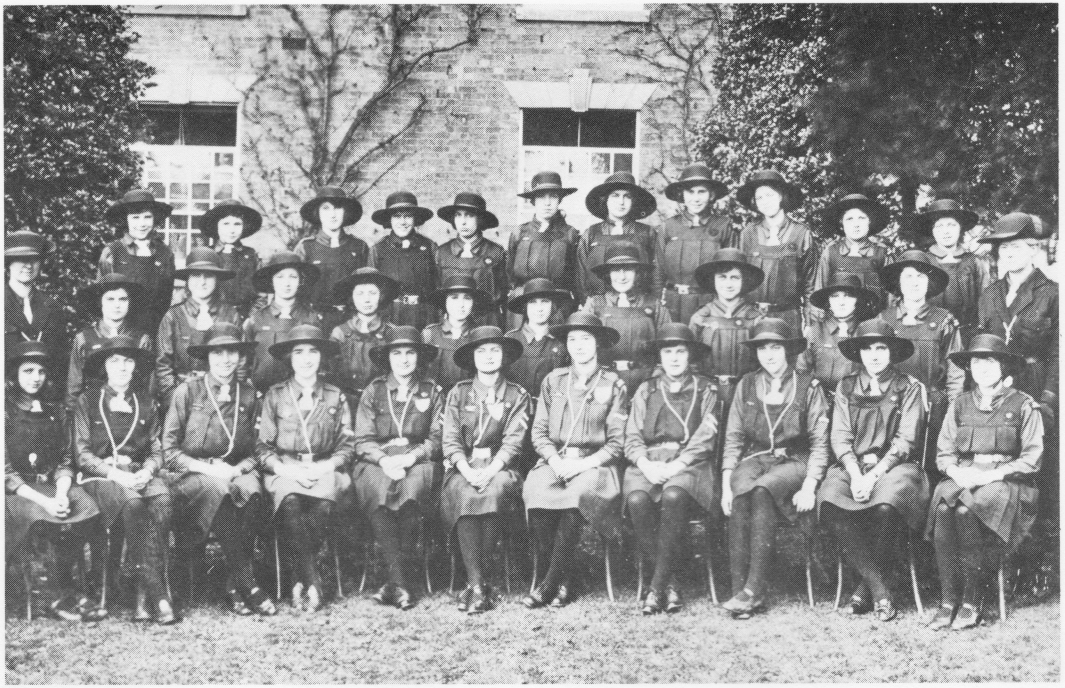
30. This shop was built by the Moravians for the benefit of the congregation in 1768 at a cost of £154, and was operated under 'the strictest rules for honest trading, best quality goods, and reasonable prices' for 160 years. For the last thirty of these years it was presided over by the much-loved John Orchard, who sold groceries, draperies, haberdashery and exotic medicaments such as ipecachuanha. The post office had also moved down from Greenside, and as postmaster John had to supervise the village's only telephone and the collection and delivery of Ockbrook's mail from and to Borrowash. He was the envy of the local boys in the early days, because for these daily journies he used a fine bicycle fitted with pneumatic tyres, no less. When he died in 1927 the shop closed its door to customers, and accommodation was found for the post office down in Church Street. The £154 building became a private house, and as such was recently offered for sale at £55,000.



31. Founding father of the Ockbrook Hudstons was William, who came here from Beeston as a boy in 1830 to be a shoemaker's apprentice at 1/- per week. In spite of his youth and modest income he quickly won the hand of the blacksmith's fourteen year old daughter Jane who lived opposite in Church Street, and, no doubt with the good man's help, they set up a teenage home in Ivy Bank, where they dwelt for the rest of their lives. They squeezed seven children into the little house and took a lodger for good measure. This is a picture of their eldest son James, who was Ockbrook's postman, and who for fifty years, seven days a week, trudged the length and breadth of the parish. In his spare time he was a shoemaker like his father, but went one better in the matter of offspring, with Charles, Alfred, Janetta, Sabina, Fanny, Baxter, Jim and Polly.

32. James had become a staunch Moravian, and was well thought of by the influential Mallalieu's, so that he was able to house his family in the first of these four cottages at Shopstones. His third son Baxter, who could scarcely go wrong with a name like that, was singled out to be trained as a plumber, which at the turn of the century meant being skilled in most matters domestic-mechanical, and indeed, some domestic-electrical, for the bigger houses were sporting their electric bells, and even electric lighting, long before the mains cables reached the village. Baxter, who lived next door but one below his father's house, also had a generous family, so once again the Hudston order of the bath in front of the fire had to be introduced, girls first, clean boys second, and dirty boys last.

33. Before the Moravians built their shop and cottages here, the Shopstones area was known as the Grange, or Grange Yard, names which may date from the time when most of the parish was owned by the abbotts of Dale. Right up until early this century quite a sizeable piece of the parish of Dale Abbey lay wholly within the parish of Ockbrook, including Little Hey Grange and Little London farms. The Grange cottages were demolished at a time when the potential for the rehabilition of such places was not recognised hereabouts. The owner had to pay full rates for dwellings in which nobody wanted to live and they were therefore a financial liability, from which he could escape only by knocking them down.



34. After the war a piece of land at the bottom of Shop Close was allocated to the 1st Ockbrook Company of Girl Guides, and here they built their substantial hut. This group was photographed in April 1923, and for those who might be interested the names inscribed on the back of the picture are as follows: Back row F. Smith, J. Robinson, C. Ross, V. Aubrey, M. Goodall, C. Winn, E. Klesel, V. Pegg, M. Prince, J. Lee, H. Crowther, Middle J. Pegg, B. Birkinshaw, E. Birtill, D. Smith, K. Kitchener, D. Thomas, M. Hotching, T. Smith, M. Elwell and M. Robinson. Front row C. Horner, C. Morley, M. Thomas, M. Webster, J. Hinton, M. Bentley, D. Naylor, C. Foster, W. Stevens, D. Moult, and M. Alger. The Guide Mistress on the right is Miss Jessica Orr, who soon after became Headmistress of the Moravian Girls School, and that on the left possibly Miss Henshaw who succeeded her as Captain.

35. The walled kitchen garden in the foreground marks the site of the Single Brethrens House. This housed the unmarried brothers and kept them at a safe distance from their Single Sisters, who had accommodation at the extreme far end of the main frontage block, but the building had a comparatively short life and was 'improved away' in 1867. The fine three story edifice behind it was built in 1822 as a boys boarding school, and was, as seen in the picture, originally detached. The house on its right-hand side was added in 1908 as accommodation for the headmaster, but it did not serve that purpose for long, for in 1915 Ockbrook's Moravian Boys School was discontinued.

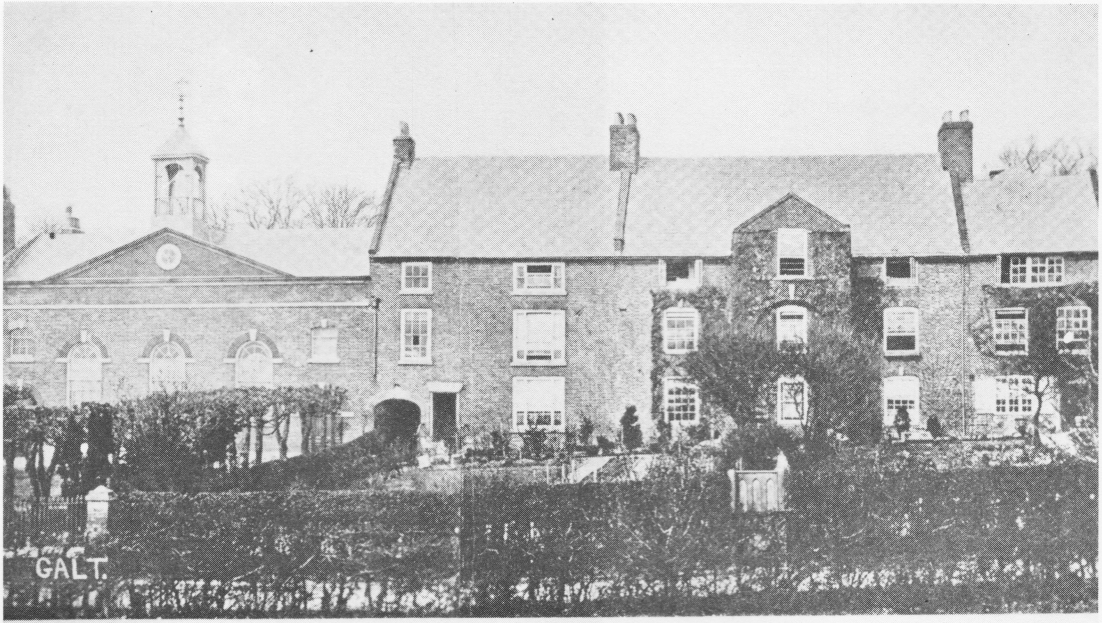
36. Here we have the Principal of the school, James Montgomery Mallalieu with his 1893 cricket team, grouped around the sundial which is said to have once graced Dale Abbey. The eleven players are presumably those dressed in white, and possibly the opening batsmen, three bowlers and wicketkeeper can be identified by their tackle. The boy in the boater is obviously the official scorer, and the one in grey flannels perhaps put the numbers on the board. Behind the Principal stands P. La Trobe, no doubt a descendant of Jean Henri, Count Boneval de la Trobe, who was born in France in 1670 and fled to England during the Hugenot persecutions, possibly accompanied by Jean le Cren.

37. Bishop Frederick Ellis, born in 1840, was the Moravian minister at Ockbrook from 1894 until 1921. He is seen here standing outside the manse with the spinster sister who kept house for him. The Georgian architects so loved their sash windows, but how unappropriately applied they are to these second floor openings, and how difficult it must have been for the upstairs maid, struggling to free one which had jambed, to remember her very reverend surroundings. Although he was totally blind, Frederick travelled the length of the country on church business, and was everywhere admired for his courage, kindness and geniality. Just to the left of the picture is a flagged path which was later known as Bishop's Walk, for here he took his daily exercise and composed his sermons. Some of the flagstones in these pathways also allegedly came from the cloisters of the ruined Abbey at Dale.

MORAVIAN CHAPEL, OCKBROOK.

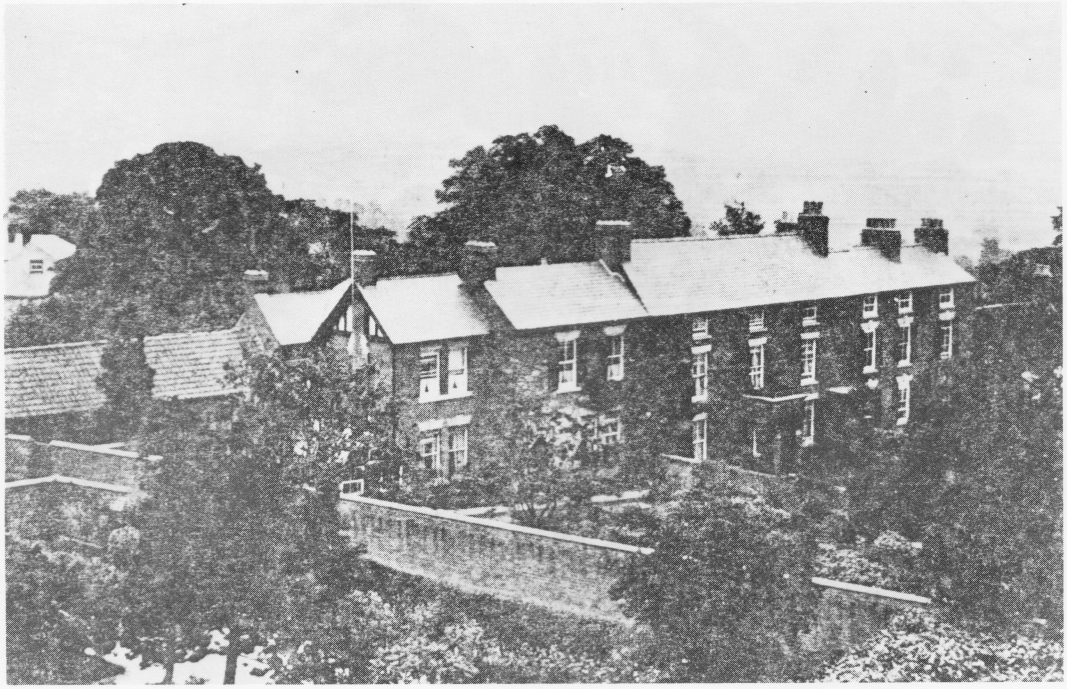
38. The chapel, built in 1752, has changed but little since then, although it would appear the original roof was of a steeper pitch. The Whitehurst clock beneath the cupola was partly a gift from the people of Ockbrook, with the condition, say the uncharitable, that the Moravians kept it going and paid for maintenance. Two avenues of pollarded limes lead up to twin entrances, and for long the pulpit was positioned centrally on the opposite wall, with a block of backed pews for men on one side and backless forms for women on the other, the latter to accommodate their voluminous garb. The organ, purchased second-hand for 25 guineas in 1752, is still blowing strong.

39. The Reverend Arthur Ward married Gertrude Warwick of Church Street in 1897. They moved to London and from there he travelled far and wide on missionary work, including a visit to Tibet which then meant journeying 700 rough miles on foot or pony. He rose in the ranks of the Moravian Church and in 1919 was elected Bishop. Greta, his only child, was of artistic bent, and when she grew up she not only taught art in one of the Moravian girls schools but herself became a Member of the Royal Academy. She made a nostalgic visit to Ockbrook in 1975 as an elderly lady to see for the first time her mother's childhood home in Church Street.



OCKBROOK GIRLS' SCHOOL, NR. DERBY

40. The Moravians first conducted two girls schools in Ockbrook, but these were combined in 1873. One was a boarding school for 'ladies' in the buildings on the right of the chapel and the other a day school for more humble girls, which was conducted in the Single Sisters House, the building on the extreme right of the frontage. In its earlier days the day school was opened only in spring and summer, because local roads were often impassable for children in the winter. Following the closing of the boys school in 1915, the girls took over all the vacated premises, and since then their school has continued to go from strength to strength.

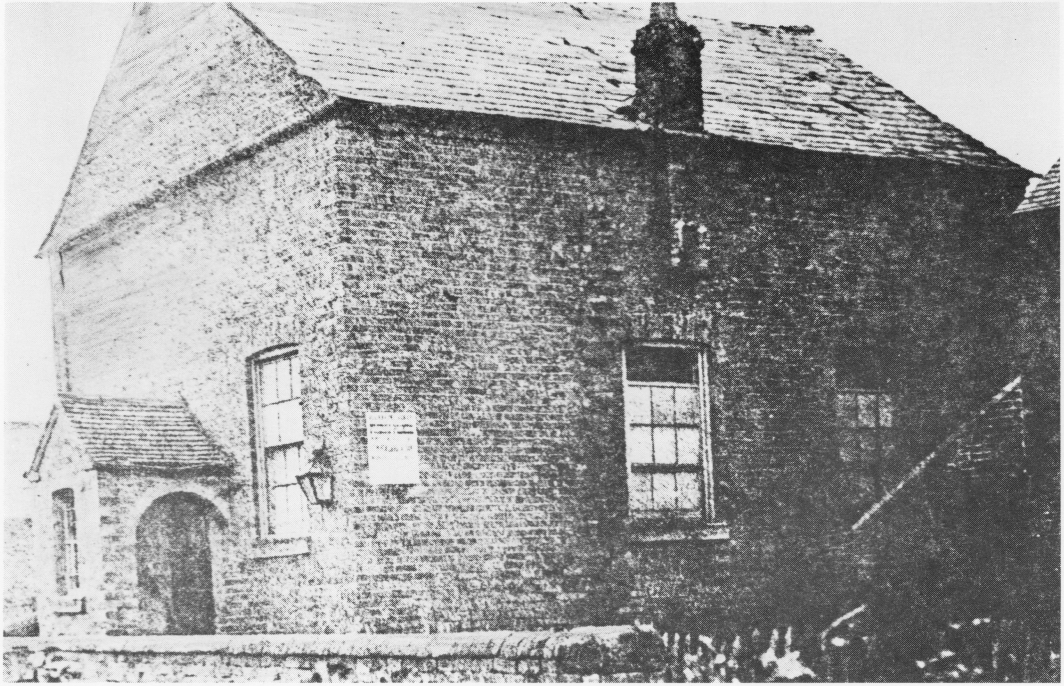


41. The tall houses which back on to Bare Lane were built for the higher echelon of Moravian settlers. At the turn of the century it so happened that both Highfield and Hillside were occupied by eminent botanists, and it is said that the Reverend Alexandre Hasse and the Reverend Gerard Smith spent hours on their knees in the fields of the parish identifying specimens. The latter, at a very mature age, tackled an intruder found in his gun cupboard, and managed to hold him down until his housekeeper had brought John Cope from Top Manor Farm opposite to her assistance. Some of Gerard's grey hairs were exhibited in court to bear witness to the violence of the struggle. For fifty years from 1825 Highfields was the headquarters of the Moravian Church in England, but in 1875 they were transferred to London.

42. This picture encapsulates the Moravian lay-out, with the straight Settlement Road running across the hillside from the top of winding Bakehouse Lane on the left to the top of wooded Bare Lane on the right. The chapel, manse and school buildings front the road, while the main residences lie at right-angles and look across Oak Tree Close to Greenside, with the Lecture Hall buildings just behind it. Above top centre is Swallows Rest, now called The Grange and to its left the roof of The Mount, both surrounded by splendid trees. The diagonal path across the Close leads down to the Shopstones dwellings and the shop, where the Grange cottages once stood. In the top right-hand corner can be seen the tenements on the narrow back road behind Green Lane referred to later, and remains of the open green between the two, which perhaps gave the road its name.

43. Joseph Cope, who lived in Top Manor Farm, seen on the right at the top of the hill, was Ockbrook's carrier for most of the nineteenth century, operating a twice-weekly service to Derby. His son John, who incidentally married the young housekeeper from Highfields who had sought his father's assistance, carried on the business through to the twentieth. The ancient farmhouse, with its magnificent views across the valley to Hopwell in the east, thereafter fell into a state of disrepair, but the bachelor brothers Brown tenaciously hung on to their tenancy long after daylight had began to penetrate its crumbling walls. Apart from the bottleneck at the bottom between Ockbrook House and the Manor House, and that at the top between the Moravian boundary wall and the farm, Bare Lane was of very generous width, and officialdom seems to have turned a blind eye to latterday encroachments.

44. The photographer was out early for this summer morning scene looking down Bare Lane, with the neglected thatched outbuildings of Top Manor Farm on the left and the well-kept houses of the Moravian élite on the right. It is said that villagers living in Green Lane, even those right at the bottom, would always come this way to get to town, because it was a well-known fact that to avoid the gradients by taking the easy route via the Ridings always resulted in a death in the family. The single footpath still diverges from the road, and the sycamore on the opposite side of the road has matured magnificently, but lower down the hill several of the other large trees which long kept the lane securely shaded have succumbed to the dreaded elm disease, and on the left flank Pares Way is an open man-made wound.



45. This, the first Methodist chapel in the parish, was built at the top of Green Lane in 1808, to be followed by one for the Primitive sect at the bottom in 1816. Both were operating in the earlier Victorian years, but in 1878 a new chapel was built on the other side of the road halfway between the two. In 1983 this was vacated and the Methodists of Ockbrook shared All Saints with the Anglicans, their Reverend Helen Mauditt being the first woman minister to conduct a communion service in an Anglican church. The 1808 chapel was converted into two dwellings by Joseph Hudstone, son of the Baxter who was a boy in the Shopstones cottage, grandson of James the postman, and great-grandson of William of Ivy Bank, and himself a retailer of many local early twentieth century anecdotes.

46. Everybody knows that Queen Victoria's wedding stockings were made in the Cross Keys, where Thomas Lewesley sold beer as a sideline. Whereas most stocking makers in the parish operated single hired machines in their own homes, Thomas employed ten men and described himself as a 'silk stocking manufacturer' rather than a 'framework knitter'. The photograph shows the long window in its original position, lighting the first floor workroom, access to which was by the exterior staircase on the left. His son was the last to operate a framework knitting machine in Ockbrook, which was in Victoria Avenue, just before the First World War. This cottage industry, which had been of such vital importance to Ockbrook in the first half of the nineteenth century, generally speaking faded away in the second, due to crushing competition from the powered machines in the towns.

47. Some well-known figures in Edwardian Ockbrook sat down for this photograph. Back left is Clarence Salsbury, the market gardener in Church Street, and back right Thomas Clifford, the go-ahead builder of Borrowash. Front left is Albert Brown, chief clerk at Barron's nurseries, centre, Samuel Lewesley, licencee of the Cross Keys, and right John Charles Ball, conductor of the Ockbrook Orchestra. The Lewesley family dominated silk stocking making and beer retailing in Green Lane for most of the nineteenth century. In addition to the Cross Keys they ran a public house on the other side of the road called 'The Prince of Wales' for a while. On the occasion of the annual Flower, Fruit and Vegetable Show, it fell to the lot of John Charles Ball to conduct the numerous brass bands from far and wide which had been in competition during the day, in an en masse finale on Rose Acre, the field on the west side of Victoria Avenue by the bypass.

48. When this picture was taken there was another road parallel to Green Lane behind the houses on the left, as before mentioned. It led from the 1808 chapel in Wesley Lane down to the Royal Oak, or up from the Royal Oak to the chapel, if that is your way of thinking, and was flanked on its far side by mean tenements. These mostly survived into the 1950's but all have now gone and the road has degenerated into scraps of foot-path. The female crocodile ascending the hill is just approaching the 1878 replacement chapel, with its large porch and foundation stones laid by local dignitaries of all denominations. There has long been a fine tolerance and understanding among the religious groups in Ockbrook, alas lacking among the hard hats at the Erewash planning office, who allowed the chapel to be pulled down rather than permitting its use for the renovation and storage of antique furniture.

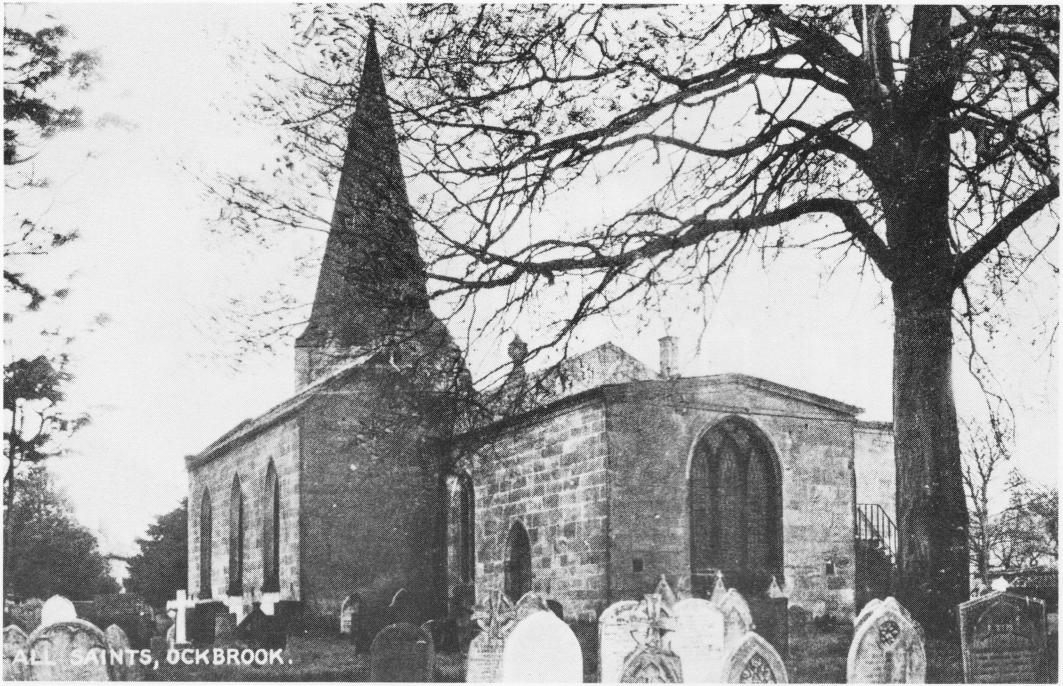
49. One would think that this photograph and the last were taken about the same time, but now a graceful lamp-post has sprouted at the top of the hill, and another opposite the Royal Oak. What welcoming beacons these must have been for the miners returning home across the distant fields on winter evenings. Two lamplighters were employed by the parish, who took it in turns to 'do' the lamps in Ockbrook and Borrowash. In summertime, when the lamps were not lit, they removed the lanterns from posts adjacent to public houses and stored them in a yard for safety. Everybody seemed to know where they were going in 1900; like the lady in the big hat, who, having surmounted the hill, has got into top gear and will sweep past the white-collared boys and white-aproned girl at a fine rate of knots.

50. The gentlemen assembled outside the Royal Oak about 1900 are believed to be members of the local Society for the Prosecution of Felons. When these societies were first formed the law was the village constable and he was often something of a joke, so that those who owned property worth stealing sought added protection by offering monetary rewards to informers. While at the time this photograph was taken the establishment of county police forces had long overtaken the need for private action, Society members liked to continue the tradition of an annual get-together, and still do. Even when they were operational the business of the meeting took about three minutes and the conviviality three hours. Among others here are the landlord, Henry Foster, William Naylor and his three sons from Scotland Farm, the Hollingworths from Bartlewood, the Copes of Green Lane and Henry Danvers the gamekeeper from Hopwell.

51. Bob Dawson of Green Lane, Ockbrook's night-soil man, is seen here surrounded by the tools of his trade, all in pristine condition. He never started work until dusk, as late as 10pm if necessary, working by lantern light throughout the night, and taking great pride in his silence and discretion. There were of course water closets in some of the big houses early in the nineteenth century, but later recognition of the dagners of cesspit water finding its way into drinking water wells, kept dry earth privies in favour until the laying of sewers and the bringing of mains water, which was delayed until the 1920's. Earlier the Ockbrook Parish Council and the Select Vestry which preceded it were very reluctant to authorise the spending of money on such expensive projects, knowing that they and their friends would have to largely foot the bill.

52. After the Ockbrook Enclosures Act of 1773 the only common ground left for the use of the landless villagers were narrow strips bordering the broad lanes leading out to Borrowash, Shacklecross and the moor, now called Victoria Avenue, Cole Lane and Moor Lane. Portions were made available by the Select Vestry at a nominal rent of 1/- a year, and there the tenant could tether his goat or grow a few vegetables. On about half a dozen of these strips in Moor Lane the occupants actually managed to get authority to build a little long dwelling, that pictured here being one of the last to be used. In a moment of aberration the Parish Council actually sold one of the strips in Victoria Avenue to Barrons the nurserymen, and suffered the embarrassment of having to go cap in hand to buy it back later.

53. Going east from the ridiculous to the sublime we ascend from the roadside on Moor Lane to the Georgian magnificence of Hopwell Hall, which along with the windmill made a picture of Ockbrook's skyline. It was the home of the Pares family from 1786 until 1895, and they, as Lords of the Manor, Rectors of the Parish, and Patrons of All Saints Church, provided a century of benevolent domination over village affairs. When they left, Edward Elsey, a Nottingham lace manufacturer, rented the property and soon had all manner of ups and downs with Ockbrook bigwigs of longer standing. His larger-than-life exploits were a source of great amusement to the lower orders, with whom he maintained a good understanding. By 1911 he had found pastures new and later the Hall was used by the Nottingham County Council as a special school, but unfortunately it succumbed to a disastrous fire in 1957.



54. Having lived at Hopwell Hall for seventeen years, Thomas Pares decided in 1803 to make special provision at All Saints Church for both the quick and the dead, and therefore had an extension built on to the Chancel which contained a private family pew above and a capacious family vault below. The extension, and the exterior staircase which he built to give access to the pew, can be seen between the chancel and the tree trunk. In 1928, long after the family had left the district, the continuing patron E.H. Pares gave his blessing to the vault being concreted over, the private pew and staircase being removed, and the extension being converted into an organ chamber. Previously the organ had been positioned on high at the west end between the twin galleries there.

55. The high ground which extends from Hopwell, which we know as Red Hills, has long been a favourite vantage point for views of the village. In this picture Church Farm spreads itself in the left middle ground and Pear Tree House stands out in the centre. Public footpaths give Redhills public right of access, and the landowners seem to have long been vastly tolerant of minor excursions from these, so that in addition to providing loud-shouting fun when snow covers its slopes, it has always been a very proper place to savour the delights of the fields and hedgerows in fresh spring, high summer and misty autumn alike.

56. This is a closer view of the ancient toftage hard by the church after it had been 'embellished' in the black and white style. The card is wrongly captioned of course, for Church Farm Cottage lies hidden behind the herbage on the right. Church Farm, then known as The Homestead, was occupied by the Chevins for most of the nineteenth century. They were relatives of the Chevins at the Queen's Head, and farmed some 80 acres which stretched up and over Carr Hill. In addition they latterly farmed the Carsington School land to the east, which became to be known as Chevin Farm.

57. Going back some thirty years and standing back some three hundred yards one can see how neat the farmyard was when taken over by William Simkin about 1905. He farmed there into the 1940's but we think the whitewash came later. Church Farm Cottage can now be seen standing at right-angles to the farmhouse and gable-end on in the picture. It is timer-framed behind its brick cladding and was no doubt once thatched. We suspect that it was built as All Saints tithe barn. To the left we can see again the staircase on the church leading up to the Pares' private pew, and to the right is the white stuccoed front of Ockbrook Lodge, then known as Brook Cottage.

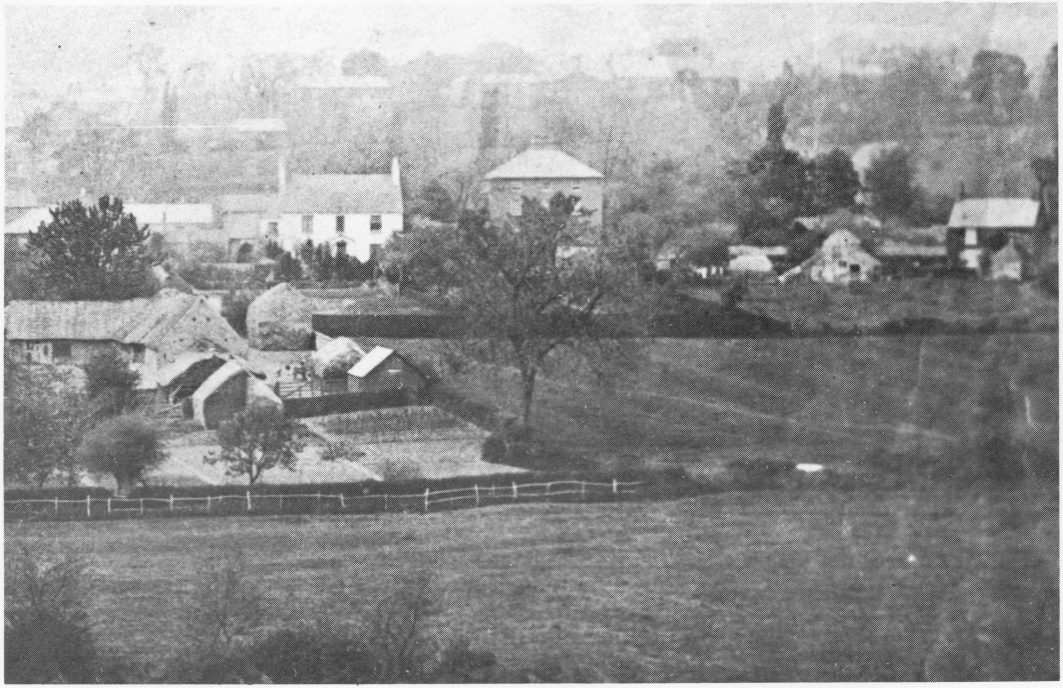
58. The vantage point for this beautiful drawing made in about 1825 was the top of the first field behind Church Farm. It was commissioned by the Moravian Church and is so photographically accurate that one suspects it could only have been produced with the aid of a pin-hole image on a ground glass screen. It shows the village pretty much as it was when Victoria first ascended the throne. Then the National School for boys was still operating in the thatched building set on a roadside strip in Bare Lane opposite the Flood Street junction, and the vicarage still lay beside the church. Other notable dear departeds depicted are the Brethren's House, seen above the Shopstones cottages, and the Manor House, extreme right. Most of the other buildings which the artist drew, saw Ockbrook through Victorian and Edwardian days, and remain today.

59. This poor picture suggests an amateur photographer's blundering attempt to produce in a flash with his magic black box a result equal to the exquisite end product of skilled artists' work nearly a century before. Such a pity that he did not choose to turn it on Ockbrook's windmill, of which no photograph can be found, but he was perhaps discouraged by the fact that it then had only two sails, and had ceased functioning some twenty-five years earlier. For by 1885 the little local cornfields had mostly changed to pasture, being unable to compete with the vast American acreages, and with the retirement of Thomas Cook, who was born on the premises, nobody seemed to fancy the role of jolly miller. Our photographer has faintly included some tall Lombardy poplars in his composition, which seem to have then been a feature of the Ockbrook scene; a group in the Ridings were affectionately known as the Seven Sisters.

60. Passing down Mill Lane from the windmill in 1850 one would arrive at 'the town'. Even as late as 1900 people still knew the first part of The Ridings, along with Church Street, Flood Street and New Street, by that name. 'Top of Town' extended to Far Lane, but thereafter there was but a rough track without buildings until one reached the cottages situated a few yards from the Green Lane junction, later known as Ridings Row. The gems of the first part of The Ridings were the Manor House, here depicted, which stood at the Bare Lane junction, and Ridings House, which lay opposite Ridings Farm. Alas both have gone, but a number of old farmhouses and cottages still preserve a little of the old atmosphere.

61. Residents of the Manor House changed rather frequently towards the end of the century and in about 1902 it became the home of William Lowe Mugliston, Superintendent of the Midland Railway, and Chairman of the Ockbrook and Borrowash Liberal Association, who may be the gentlemen with the dog in the picture. He was followed in 1916 by John James Spencer, or 'Lawyer Spencer', as he was known in the village, perhaps to distinguish him from the local tailor who was also a Spencer. While the name of the Manor House was an early Victorian affectation, the older farmhouse parts may well have been the home of one of the ten Ockbrook Lords of the Manor, most of whom were farmers.

62. Most of the mid-Victorian building work in Ockbrook was done by Frederick Greasley who first took over the old brick-making site opposite the cricket field associated with Rose Cottage in Victoria Avenue, and then in 1860 moved his business to the yard beside The Yews in Derby Road at Borrowash. John S. Clifford followed him there in about 1895, and was soon doing work far beyond the confines of the parish. Meanwhile James Loftus re-established a yard in Ockbrook and is seen here, extreme right, supervising his workmen in The Ridings. These bleak but solidly constructed 'villas' were typical of thousands put up in the Midlands before the 1914-1918 war. If their frontage was set back a few feet from the pavement edge, like the ones here, they qualified for the adjective 'palisaded', and obviously housed a better class of person.



63. The fine Georgian front of Ockbrook House has dominated the middle-ground of the village, and the view from Red Hills, since the year 1750, when it was built. Mrs. Arkwright, who married into the wealthy Derbyshire family of that name, lived there in the 1890's and played an intimate part in Ockbrook affairs, including the hiring out of baby clothes for a penny a week. The house on the left, which he called Sherbourne Villa, was where William Leaver spent his retirement. He came up from London in 1853, died in 1875 and is buried in the churchyard. His daughter presented the stained glass window in the church as a memorial to her parents. On the right are the sheds, greenhouses and dwelling of Clarence Salsbury, now No. 82 Church Street, who operated a market gardening and coal retailing business there.

64. Living at Sherbourne Villa from 1875 until 1896 was the Warwick family, who had abandoned the name donated by William Leaver and sustituted 'Brook Cottage'. John Alfred Warwick (standing), son of an eminent scientific lecturer, invented the block system of railway signalling and became the first Signal and Telegraph Engineer of the Midland Railway. This photograph may well have been taked by Richard Keene, the famous Derby photographer, who was a close friend of the family. The Warwicks were followed at Brook Cottage by the Dales, whose younger members frequented Ockbrook's nine-hole golf course, and then, in 1915 by Joseph Birkinshaw junior, whose father lived at Fellside. In 1923 Col. Douglas Forman bought the house, and he changed its name again, this time to 'Ockbrook Lodge', which it has been ever since.

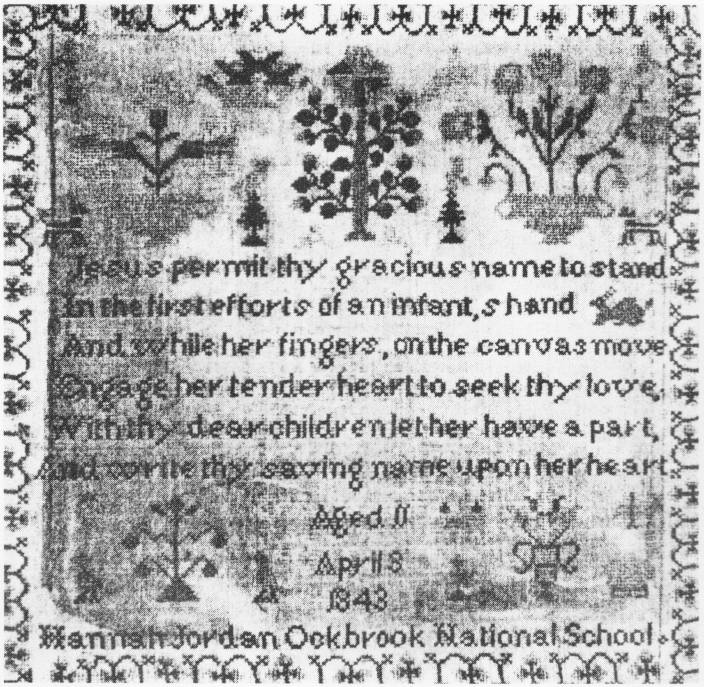
65. After his retirement John Alfred Warwick developed his firework making interest. He had this manufacturing shed erected halfway down the garden, and a brick-built gunpowder store right at the bottom. Both were equipped with exterior boxes in which he kept dry slippers; a change of footware not only preventing damp from being taken in, but avoided the creation of sparks from the nailheads of his boots which might have caused a premature explosion. The blast wall on the right was specially built to try out the elaborate set pieces in which he specialised. Then, on Oak Tree Close on the 5th November, he set off the whole of his year's production in one glorious display, witnessed by not only the village but also visitors from far and wide.

66. Croquet was popular in Ockbrook as everywhere else in the 1880's, the ladies obviously finding it a game with which they could cope in spite of the voluminous attire which fashion then demanded. The layout of the equipment is a little bizarre, and one suspects that either the rules were flexible at the time or a non-playing photographer had arranged it for his picture. In any case the hoops look awfully generous for the size of the balls. The chimneys over the garden wall are those of No. 82 Church Street which later became Clarence Salsbury's market gardening establishment. Later still it blossomed into one of Ockbrook's many little 'general' shops where Mrs. Murphy sold her hot home-made meat pies, with free gravy if you brought your own jug.

67. But the craze for croquet was relatively short-lived and by 1890 many of the grounds specially levelled and lawned for the purpose were having their hoops pulled out and a tennis net stretched across the middle. In Ockbrook it would appear that the men did not even bother to remove their waistcoats to indulge in the new game of pat-ball, and while the close-corsetted ladies obviously insisted on playing their part, they found no difficulty in keeping their heads properly covered while doing so. Later they took the game less lightly, and in the Edwardian years those who could squeeze a tennis lawn into their garden would exchange visits with others and play semi-serious matches. Then, after the war and a trial run in the Manor House garden, the Ockbrook and Borrowash Tennis Club was inaugurated on Barron ground off Nottingham Road, and the way was set for penniless gamins to become multi-millionaires by patting the ball better than the rest.

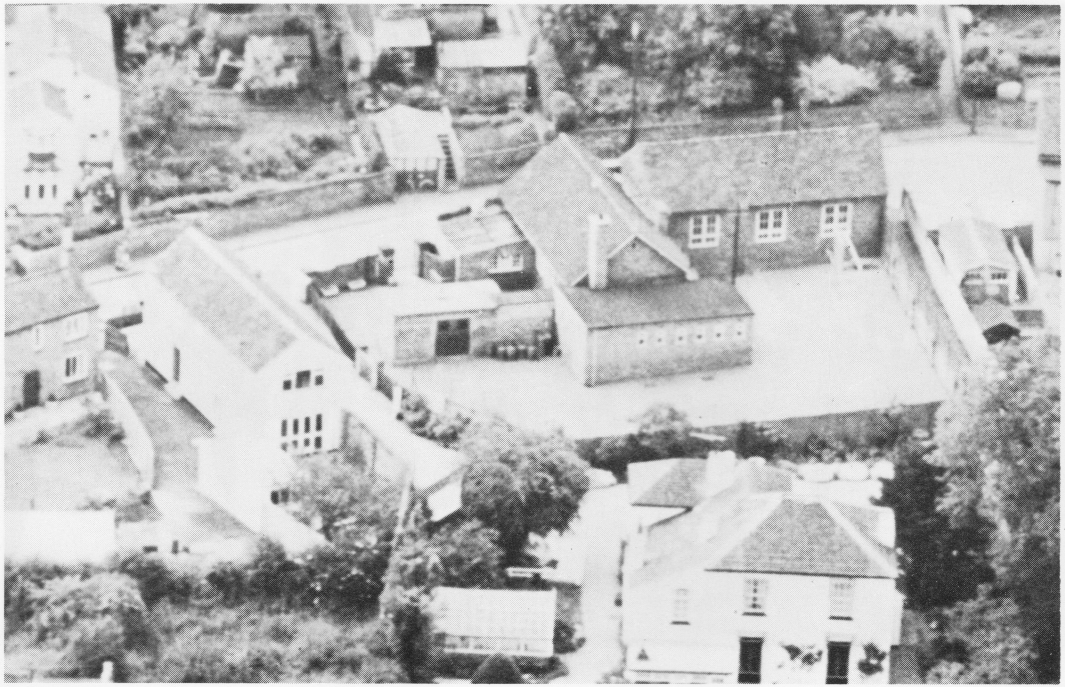
68. In 1927 Maude Allen took up residence with her husband John in the first of the two 'villas' built by James Loftus early in the century immediately below Ockbrook Lodge. She was born in 1902 and is seen here at the age of three with Louisa, her elder sister. She loved life and people and for eighty odd enthusiastic years enjoyed this village, giving even more than she received. Before marriage she was John Orchard's post-office assistant up at Shopstones, but when he died she was too busy with a young husband and expectations to accept the offer of carrying on in his stead. Later she became a Parish Councillor and we can all be thankful for yer years of vigilance and fearless defence of the best of Ockbrook.

69. This wedding took place in Ockbrook in 1898, when large flowery hats were obviously à la mode. It is not known at which church the ceremony was held, but at one time it was not uncommon for Moravians and other non-conformists to be married at All Saints, the happy couple feeling perhaps that such was necessary to get the official seal of the Establishment on their contract. The bridegroom, whose name was Cranham, was one of the best local cricketers of his time and had trials with Derbyshire. Early photographers seemed to demand appropriate studied poses to match the occasion, thus the groom looks suitably masterful, the bride suitably submissive, the bridesmaids suitably supportive, and the child suitably squashed. Even the dog seems to know his place.

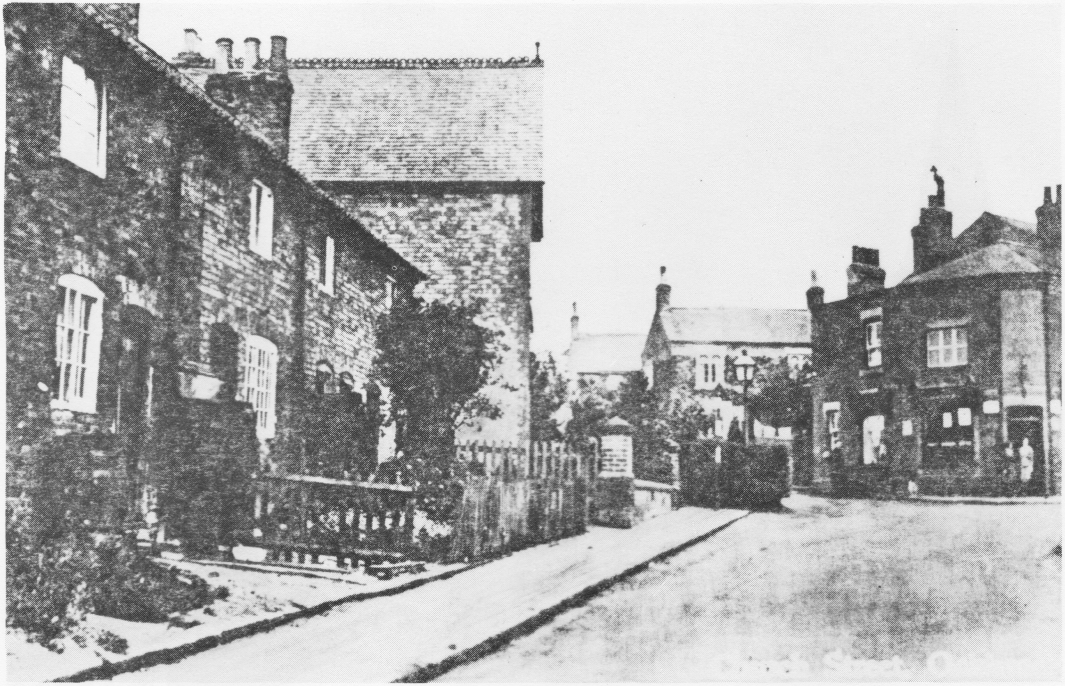

Jesus permit thy gracious name to stand
As the first efforts of an infant's hand
And while her fingers, on the canvas move
Engage her tender heart to seek thy love,
With thy dear children let her have a part,
And write thy saving name upon her heart.
Aged 11
April 8
1843
Hannah Jordan Ockbrook National School

70. The first part of the Church Street School was built in 1829, for girls. Its construction was financed by Thomas Pares and it was placed in the front left-hand corner of a strip of land he owned which lay between Glovers Twitchell and the forge. In 1840 it was enlarged to its present size to become a mixed school and then in 1848 an additional building was provided for the infants in Flood Street. About this time the vicar of the day, the Reverend Samuel Hey, became concerned about the education of the increasing number of children living at Borrowash, and he had a school built for them on the Derby Road entirely at his own expense. These schools were known as 'National' or 'Church' schools, which were abbreviations of their proper designation, which was 'National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church' school.

71. The gentleman in the class photograph is a mystery. Could it be our friend the Reverend Lewis Lewis, suitably bowed by his years and distaff control? The headmistress, the beloved Miss Harriet Nadin, will be one of the two ladies on the right. She chose to continue to live in her father's forge cottage next door to the school rather than take up the official headteachers' residence in the church-owned School House across the street. There an upstage mid-wife, Miss Eliza Sells, held sway. She only 'did' for the local gentry, the villagers having to content themselves with the services of dear old Granny Green from Church Row, who donned a clean cap and apron for each delivery.



72. The forge next door to the school was built for Thomas Dowman in 1826 to replace his ancient premises opposite the White Swan, and George Nadin, Harriet's father, continued as Ockbrook's blacksmith until the end of the century. When he retired the forge was taken over by two local lads Charlie Cope and Joe Wheatley, who added wheel-wrighting to the existing iron and wood work done there. At that time there was a tiny home-made confectionary shop on the other side of the school, run by Florence Richdale. The birds eye view of this cosy corner shows Ivy Bank, where Thomas's daughter Jane helped found the Hudston family, top left, George's forge below, Harriet's school alongside, a garage where Florence's little shop stood extreme right and Glover's Pear Tree House at the bottom.



73. Early in the 1900's the shop at the corner of New Street was built on to the four new Church Street houses as a lock-up premises. The room over, which had its own external staircase, was retained by the owner, John Henry Spencer, as his tailoring workshop. He was one of the family of Ockbrook tailors who seemed to specialise in little lock-up shops, and he would make you an indigo blue suit for £2, including two pairs of trousers. Henry Plant, who had recently married Janetta of the Hudston family, set up as a grocer in the new shop to challenge the near-monopoly of John Orchard up at Shopstones. He and his family lived in the house adjoining the shop, and when John Orchard died they took over the post office, sacrificing their front parlour for the purpose. The ladies standing at the shop door are two of the three daughters who reopened the shop as 'Plants' several years after their father's retirement.

74. Joseph Birkinshaw, who became a generous supporter of All Saints Church, was one of several well-to-do businessmen who sought domestic sanctuary in Ockbrook towards the end of the century. He was a colliery owner, coke and iron merchant, and perhaps a millionaire by present day standards. Among his gifts he presented the lych gate in 1923 and five years later paid for the removal of the organ from its position on high between the twin galleries to the floor of the chancel extension built by the Pares. He lived at Fellside in Cole Lane, married twice and died in 1933 at the age of 86. He and both his wives lie beneath a substantial memorial in the churchyard.

75. As we reach the end of our perambulations it will be obvious that Ockbrook has no one centre, but is strung around like a string of beads. Even the parish church is peripheral. As before mentioned the village forge once stood on the piece of ground pictured, and when it was abandoned for new premises higher up the street in 1826, part of the vacated area was used for an extension to the churchyard, but the rest was left empty. For most of the years that followed the cottages on the right and those of Church Row seemed to house hundreds of children, and this square of unconsidered ground obviously became their domain, a safe enough place to play, until the motor car drove them indoors, when they were obliged perforce to sit still and watch the games of others on their television sets.

76. And so we return again to the churchyard where our imaginary journey began, for a last look at All Saints, Church Farm, and the tall trees. Wandering among the overgrown memorial stones before wending our way home, we see the names of so many of the Victorian and Edwardian characters we met, who, in their day, like us, loved and lived in Ockbrook.